

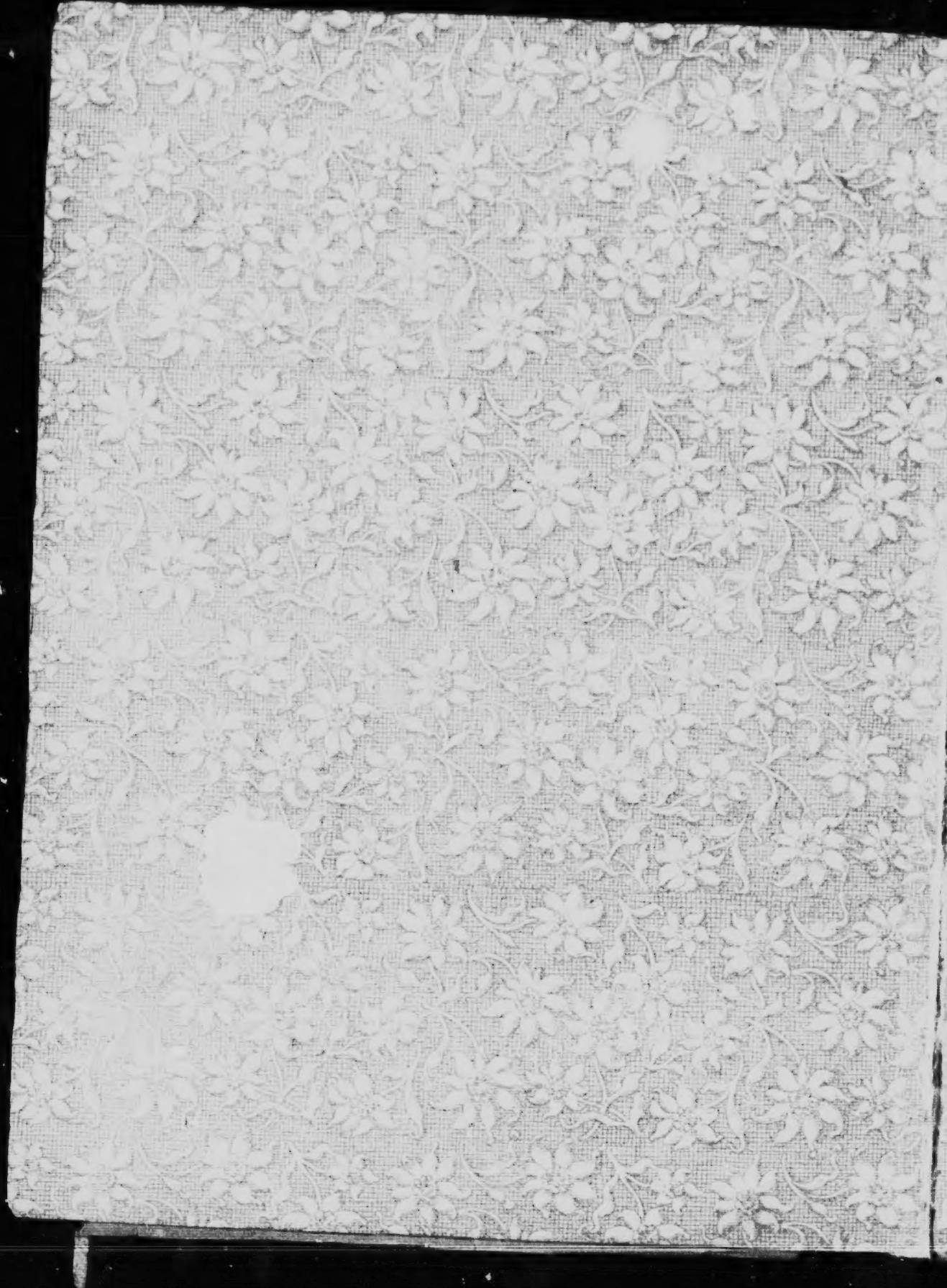
The Weed's Philosophy

AND
other
POEMS.

by

Martha Martin.

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The Weed's Philosophy and Other Poems

By

MARTHA MARTIN

"And what is writ is writ—
Would it were worthier."

—Byron.

MONTRÉAL
1913

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THE WEED'S PHILOSOPHY

I

Nay, but tell me, am I not unlucky indeed,
To arise from the earth and be only a weed ?

II

Ever since I came out of my dark little seed,
I have tried to live rightly, but still am a weed.

III

To be torn by the roots and destroyed — this my meed.
And despised by the gardener for being a weed.

IV

Ah ! but why was I born when man longs to be freed
Of a thing so obnoxious and bad as a weed ?

V

Now the cause of myself and my brothers I plead,
Say — can any good come of my being a weed ?

VI

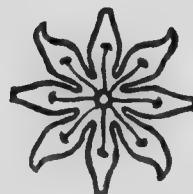
If a purpose divine is in all things decreed,
Then there must be some benefit from me — a weed.

VII

If of evil and suffering the world still has need
In its path of development, then I a weed

VIII

Must form part of that plan which in Nature I read,
Though I live but to die just for being — a weed.



ON —

My soul is quickened as I gaze on thee,
Oh ! thou of whom it may in truth be said
That man was after God's own image made.
How full of love and sweet benignity
Each act, and word, and glance of thine so true,
Reflecting all the grace of Heaven through.



THE TRIUMPH OF NIGHT

I

The chase is o'er, Night's victory won,
 Her silver bow I see
Suspended 'gainst the sky's dark wall.
 Now Day, her enemy,
Has been by countless arrows slain
 And forced at length to flee.

II

Or is yon shining crescent hung
 Across Heaven's cloudy bar,
Perhaps Diana's silver horn
 With which she calls each star
To wake — and keep close sentinel
 From distant heights afar?

III

Night reigns supreme, the Earth is dipped
 In cool and fragrant dews,
A breathless stillness undisturbed
 Doth Nature's world suffuse,
And all about invites — invokes
 The presence of the Muse.

THE FROZEN SENTINEL

(FROM THE GERMAN)

I

Once on a Christmas Eve when there occurred a heavy frost,
A sentinel was stationed at the powder-tower post.

II

He paces up and down with shouldered arms thro'
snow and sleet,
"In six weeks' time, beloved one, we two again shall
meet.

III

"When six weeks pass away, sweetheart, when six
weeks pass away,
I'll swing you in the dance, sweetheart, and marry
you in May.

IV

"There's feasting and rejoicing in my father's house
to-night,—
How bitter cold it is, and my moustache is frozen
quite."

v

He leans against the sentry-box, his gun still clasped,
tho' numb,
His head is sunk upon his breast as if by sleep
o'ercome.

VI

Hark ! distant bells are ringing, yet he does not hear
or see,
He leans against the sentry-box,—a frozen form is he.

VII

A sentry froze to death last night..... so rumor ran
next morn,
And to the beat of muffled drums he to his grave
was borne.

VIII

Above his head the cannons roared with loud and
crashing sound.
The general issued the command then laid him
underground.

IX

And in the self-same hour down the village, blithe
and gay,
A maid sits at her spinning-wheel and sings this
roundelay :

X

“ When six weeks pass away, sweetheart, when six
weeks pass away,
I'll swing you in the dance, sweetheart, and marry
you in May,”



AT PARTING

A four-leaved clover nosegay, dear,
I give you ere we part,
From out my garden I have plucked
For you a bleeding-heart;
A sprig of blue forget-me-not—
A rose with these I blend,
And an immortelle which shall speak
Of Love that knows no end.



A BROKEN WING

I

One late November afternoon,
When trees were standing bleak and bare,
And birds in numerous flocks had flown
To southern climates, warm and fair.

II

A robin fluttering on the lawn
Was making vain attempts to fly,
And on the cold and dismal ground,
Seemed left deserted —there to die.

III

His mate had kept his company
For many a cold and chilly day ;
But losing heart, and feeling numb,
At length was forced to fly away.

IV

And thus this bird was left alone :
What could his flight be hindering ?
I hastened out to see, and found
The robin had a broken wing.

V

A broken wing—migration now
Alas ! must be debarred to him,
A bright, warm land—the bird's fair Heaven
Remain a vision, distant, dim.

VI

Ah ! crippled robin, man like thee
Too often cannot reach his goal,
Ambitions thwarted—efforts crushed,
Pin down to earth his longing soul.

VII

The song is ever in his heart,
Although he have no voice to sing,
He strives towards Duty, God and Heaven ;
Ah, me ! he has a broken wing.

BEETHOVEN

I

Oh thou immortal Beethoven,
To pay thee tribute with my pen
Forsooth, I scarcely dare ;
Sublime within the realm of tone,
Thou standest on a height alone,
None may with thee compare.

II

Thy matchless music ever gives
Each human soul that strives and lives
New strength, and zeal and hope.
And in thy wondrous melody
We find at length a ready key
The gates of heaven to ope.

III

Tis thou hast searched the human heart
And harmonized into thine art
Its secrets hidden there.
Life's passions, sorrows, loves and fears,
Its radiant joys — its bitter tears
Thy music layeth bare.

SLUMBER-SONG

(FROM THE GERMAN)

I

The night wind through the trees is streaming,
And all the world in slumber lies,—
So now in sleep and sweetest dreaming,
My darling, close your pretty eyes.

II

The silv'ry moon its light revealing,
Will to your chamber soon repair,—
And from your rosy lips be stealing
The whispers of your evening prayer.



A SPRING IDYL

I

Spring has arisen from darkness to light,
Winter has lifted her pinions white,
Shaken her plumage of ice and of snow.
Bearing off dreariness, cold, want and woe.

II

Filled with an ecstasy none may surmise,
Violets peep from the sod to the skies,
Snowdrops their delicate mantles unfold,
Crocuses blossom in purple and gold.

III

Trees are athrobbing with quick flowing sap,
Leafbuds awake from their long winter nap,
Waken — and little by little reveal
Secrets that they can no longer conceal.

IV

Close by my window, the robin and thrush
Burst into song on the tall lilac bush,
Make the air vibrate with melodies sweet,
In their delirium of joy now complete.

V

Spring, blessed springtime when Nature's a child,
Rapturous, thrilling, exuberant, wild,—
Tingling with life, and with love all aglow,
Summer is calling — alas ! you must go.



ON —

I

Just to behold once those sweet, soulful eyes,
Hear the low tones of that voice soft and clear,
And be aware that there dwells 'neath the skies
One who belongs to a loftier sphere.

II

When I consider her pure, noble life,
Given in true self-surrender away,
Then I believe that, despite sin and strife,
Mankind hath yet its redeemers to-day.

III

Friend of the friendless, the sick and the poor,
Bringing each happiness, solace, and rest,
Bidding them hope and in patience endure,—
Who that hath known her can fail to feel blest ?



THE WATER LILY

I

Remote from reach, upon a shore
All mud and slime and weed,
Where dragon flies their sun-bath take
And haste away with speed.

II

Where human footsteps seldom tread
Along the dismal shore,
Hemmed in by trees that widely spread
Their branches to and fore.

III

Here by her pipe-stemmed leaves entwined
That on the waters lie,
The lily rears her head to find
But solitude and sky.

IV

She holds aloft her snow-white cup
All filled with nectar wine,
For insect and for bird to sup
From out this chalice fine.

V

The lily grows — a splendid flower,
None know her grief and pain ;
But does she in her lonely bower
Bloom for the world in vain ?

VI

Ah no ! a lesson deep and wise
This flower to man has taught,—
That often in unseemly guise
Are grace and beauty wrought.

VII

As darkness brings at length the morn,
As rainstorms clear the air,
So from the black mud lake is born
The virgin lily fair.

WHEN THE ROSE'S BLOOM IS GONE

(FROM THE GERMAN)

I

When the rose's bloom is gone
Spring comes to an end,
When at its meridian
Must the sun descend.

II

All that can no longer climb
Falls into decay,
Therefore, loved one, it is time
Death bore me away.

III

What is left me to attain
Having found Love's bliss?
Let me — clasped by thee again —
Die sealed with thy kiss.

AUTUMN AT LAKE JOSEPH

I

I look out on the tall, proud oak,
Out on the elm-tree blown,—
The hemlock, fir, and waving pine
Shedding its crisp, brown cone.

II

These loyal trees the autumn breeze
Has decked with pennons gay,—
And crimson, yellow, purple, green,
Are leaf-flags holding sway.

III

The birds in flocks have southward fled,
Deserted is each nest—
Which in the Summer-time made homes,
For shelter and for rest.

IV

No longer pipes the whip-poor-will,
I miss the jay and thrush—
And trees alive with joyous songs—
Are silenced to a hush.

V

Alas ! too soon November bold,
Will use his powerful trust,—
And all Earth's pride and glory shall
Be mingled with the dust.

VI

The flags on every bush and branch,
Will soon be sered and furled,—
And tossed by an indifferent wind,
Out on the lonely world.

VI

I look out on the shaded woods,—
The distant hills I scan—
And know that Nature follows, too
The allotted Fate of Man.

ON HER SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

I

Seventy years March hails her old,
Yet it seems to me in truth,
That this period marks her youth
When I her dear face behold.

II

On her brow no wrinkles lie,
Scarcely silvered is her hair,
While her eyes are bright and fair,
Like a clear and cloudless sky.

III

Care and grief have been her share,
Loss and disappointment too,
But through all she nobly knew
These 'th fortitude to bear.

IV

In a being so whole-souled
With a heart all free from stain,
Time must wield his power in vain,—
Mother *never can* grow old.



WIEDERFINDEN

(FROM THE GERMAN)

“ Rolling waves that dance and gleam,”
Spake the flowers to the stream,
“ Haste not with such speed extreme.”

But the brooklet made reply,—
“ Through the country I must hie,
Mingle with the rivers free
Till at length I reach the sea.
Then will I come back to you,
From high Heaven, in drops of dew.”



THE SPANGLED TREES

I

Drearly all thro' a dull winter's day,
Down came the drizzling rain,—
Down on the mountain in ermine of snow,
Dripping and sprinkling the Earth too below,
Led by the wind's wild strain.

II

Cheery and happy their mission to fill
Out from the clouds they fell,—
Thousands of raindrops beginning to freeze,
Clung to the motherly arms of the trees,
Where worked a wondrous spell.

III

When the next morning these raindrops awoke,
Soon as they opened their eyes,
Found themselves changed into gems the most rare—
Diamonds and pearls—sparkling jewels they were,
Strung into rosaries.

IV

For the good Sun sent her fairy beams out,
Each with a wand of gold,
Bidding them touch every raindrop — when lo !
Bright precious stones they became, all aglow
Dazzlingly fair to behold.

V

If life's hard duties and trials we meet
Willingly, without repine.
They like the raindrops transfigured will be,
And we shall in them Beatitudes see
Making our lives divine.



LITTLE METIS

I

'Tis a joy beyond measure,
A happy release,
To come to the freedom
Of Little Metis.

II

To drink of its air,
Strongly seasoned with brine,
And oftentimes mingled
With cedar and pine.

III

Like a prisoner loosed
From his fetters and chain,
We flee from the heat
Of the city to gain

IV

Renewal of vigor,
And spirits refreshed,
Our cares and our weariness
All lulled to rest.

V

The sheltering rocks
Bid us beachward to dream,
Or watch sailing vessels
Glide down the Gulf stream.

VI

And often allured
By the moon's shimmering light
We steer our canoe
O'er the waters by night.

VII

Ah ! this is the haven
Of joy, health and peace--
All hail ! and a blessing
On Little Metis.

ELEGY

V ictoria, queen all other queens above,
I mmortalized on Earth as great and good,
C ombining in thy reign of peace and love
T he graces of ideal womanhood.
O ur hearts are steeped in grief that thou are gone,
R everèd sovereign all the world held dear.
I n radiant splendour shon'st thou like the sun ;
A nd now we mourn the setting of thy sphere.



EVENING SONG

(FROM THE GERMAN)

At eventide,
When the moon shines out on high,
Songs light up the poet's heart,
Brightly, brightly gleaming.

At eventide,
When the moon shines out on high,
Tears unbidden rise and start,
From the eyelids streaming.

At eventide,
When the moon shines out on high,
'Tis of thee, my all who art,
I am dreaming, dreaming.



MOUNT SHASTA

I

Like some gigantic wave congealed,
Thy white crest towering high
Against the heavens, thou risest there
In regal majesty.

II

We gaze far up thy snowy heights
Mount Shasta, strong and free,
From pointed spruce and cedars green
To thy pure radiancy.

III

Down in the valley, at thy feet
The peasant folk abide,
And in their simple, rural homes
Feel sheltered by thy side.

IV

Protecting Power, thou art, oh Mount,
That every fear disarms,
Surrounding us, embracingly
Like everlasting arms.

SUNSET AT OGUNQUIT

What mystic glory gilded earth and sea,
When fair Ogunquit we took leave of thee !
The setting sun transfigured seemed to be
As down the western slope so silently
I watched him gently, slow v. sink and die.
A flaming battlefield appeared the sky,—
The sun, a hero left upon the plain
By countless deadly, golden ar bows slain.
And Nature glowed with pride that he should make
This sacrifice alone for Night's sweet sake.



A SUMMER IDYL

I

Insects murmur softly o'er me,
Rippling waves trip up the shore,
Gentle breezes in the pine-trees
Tell of peace forevermore.

II

Humming birds on wings a-whirring
Sip choice nectar from the flowers,
Marigold and sweet geraniums
Yield their honey thro' the hours.

III

In the deep blue vault of Heaven
Clouds are drifting on and on,
Slowly, silently are drifting
To some port to me unknown

IV

And aweary I am seeking
Rest in this sequestered place, --
Folded in the arms of Nature,
Find repose in her embrace.

LAKE JOSEPH



“LONG SINCE AND NOW”

(FROM THE GERMAN)

With joy I welcomed each new morn in youth,
At eve I wept — but since old age arose,
I start each day in doubt, and find, forsooth,
A sacred happiness attends its close.



A MAY MORNING

I

The gates of Heaven are flung apart
That Spring may step without
To bring her treasures down to earth
And scatter them about.

II

With what sweet joy and silent hope
The very air is rife,
Each blade of grass, each tiny bud,
Is throbbing with new life.

III

The birds are nesting in the trees
As cheerily they sing,
The happiness they once more feel
At the return of Spring.

IV

Oh ! might this season exquisite,
But linger on and on,
These innocent, young budding days
That Nature smiles upon.

V

But summer has her place to fill,
And thus, alas ! so soon,
The radiant mornings of the May,
Slip into pensive June.



IN SOLITUDE

I

Here to the beech woods I have come,
The morn is fresh and fair,
And in the solitude I breathe
A hallowed, peaceful air.

II

The sunbeams play at hide and seek
Among the sheltering trees,
A sportive chipmunk brushes by,
A song-bird woos the breeze.

III

My soul is steeped in soothing balm,
Within this still retreat,
Where folded in kind Nature's arms
Is solace that is sweet.

IV

The mossy bank on which I lie
Seems like a sacred shrine,
Here in these woods so eloquent
With harmonies divine.

V

I look out towards the Infinite
Whose ways I cannot grasp,
And 'tis as if a hand was stretched
To hold me in its clasp.

VI

Oh Law supreme, oh Power unknown,
I solitude I come,
And filled with awe and reverence
I bow before thee — dumb.

“I WEPT WHILE I WAS DREAMING”

(FROM THE GERMAN)

I

I wept while I was dreaming,
I dreamed that thou was dead,—
I woke — my cheeks all moistened
With tears that I had shed.

II

I wept while I was dreaming
Dreamed thou didst me forsake,—
I woke — and still was sobbing
As if my heart would break.

III

I wept while I was dreaming,
I dreamed thee good and true,—
I woke — the tears still flooding
My happy eyes anew